

Borough of Metuchen – TA 2018 – Grove Avenue and Eggert Avenue Bicycle Lanes
Borough of Metuchen, Middlesex County
Preliminary Engineering Phase
Design Consultant: NV5
Virtual Public Information Center
COMMENT RESPONSE SUMMARY

Prepared By: NV5 and Metuchen Borough

Question Period: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 through Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Progress Print: November 8, 2021

Questions received through 10/20/2021

Document Format:

Question or comment received during Virtual Public Information Center or question period

Response | [Response to question or comment provided by NV5 and Metuchen Borough.](#)

Virtual Public Information Center questions and comments:

General Questions and Comments

1. Will this session be recorded for replay / will there be a link where we can download the presentation material and post comments?

Response | The Virtual Public Information Center presentation video, PowerPoint presentation slide and plan set will be provided on the Metuchen Borough website:
<http://metuchennj.org/metnj/Announcements/Grove%20Ave%20Bike%20Lane%20Project.html/> [top](#)
Questions and Comments between October 6, 2021 to October 20, 2021 can be sent to:
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2. Will Eggert Avenue be painted with bicycle lanes?

Response | The proposed improvements included on the plans are based on the existing widths of Eggert Avenue and Grove Avenue. In areas with available space, the proposed improvements will include 11' wide travel lanes and 5' wide bicycle lanes, including color pavement treatment. Due to the existing width of Eggert Avenue, bicycles will be required to share the travel lanes with vehicular traffic. As a result, shared lane markings are proposed.

3. Is there anything we can do to make the proposed bicycle lanes as protected bicycle lanes? Could the Borough fund bollards through their budget in the future to protect this lane? Can you look into having a bike lane on only one side of the road? Do you would have enough space to put protection up? Or another option to have an elevated bump, like a mini speed bump, along the outside of the bike lanes to let the cars know there is a separation between the car lane and the bike lane.

Response | Due to the existing roadway width along Grove Avenue, protected bicycle lanes cannot be installed since there is inadequate space available. In order to install protected bicycle lanes, roadway widening including pavement, replacing curb, sidewalk, drainage structures, potential utilities and likely easements or fee parcels from private properties would be required to construct protected bicycle lanes.

Installation of plastic delineators, plastic bollards, raised pavement (elevated bumps) for a protected bicycle lane or shared use path / cycle track has not been considered due to inadequate spacing available. Previous studies performed considered treatment options for Grove avenue and it was determined that a bicycle lane can be constructed. A parallel type of speed bump as described is not advisable

The Borough also noted that bollards present a maintenance issue including during snow removal and the appearance of continuous bollards or a barrier may not be preferred by others along the

| corridor.

4. Is there any cooperation or discussion with Edison Township on continuing the bike lanes farther up Grove Ave?

Response | Metuchen Borough has made Edison Township aware of this Federally funded project and received an invitation to this meeting. As this project progresses, Metuchen Borough will make Edison Township aware of the proposed improvements.

5. Will parking still be allowed along the curb on Grove Avenue in areas with bike lanes? Will any homeowners lose the ability to park in front of their houses?

Response | A review of existing parking along Grove Avenue has been performed and it was determined that properties either having parking in the form of driveways on Grove Avenue or adjacent side streets or alley ways. Parking on the dedicated bicycle lanes will not be permitted. In the event of a special event, closure of the bicycle lanes for parking may be required.

6. Has a traffic study been done to ensure this is safe for bicyclists that may include children? Does the Borough have any indication how many people ride their bikes over Grove today?

Response | A traffic study was not performed during the Preliminary Engineering phase of this project. Grove Avenue was selected for proposed improvements due to width and presence of Metuchen High School.
A Planning Level study was completed in November 2016 titled "Borough of Metuchen Complete Streets Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan"

7. Will Amboy Avenue sharrows be replaced that intersects at Eggert Avenue?

Response | Existing sharrows on Amboy Avenue are outside of the project limits. The sharrows placed on Amboy Avenue were installed by Middlesex County and are maintained by Metuchen Borough. If the sharrows need to be replaced, it will be done by Metuchen Borough.

8. Why not create a bike lane across Norris Avenue rather than Grove Avenue?

Response | A 2016 Bicycle plan was prepared regarding existing and potential bicycle corridors throughout the municipality. It was decided that due to the presence of Metuchen High School (students traveling to and from the school, potential to reduce vehicular traffic if students commute to school via bicycles), existing width and lack of residential on-street parking that Grove Avenue would be a preferred location for bicycle lanes and was pursued for Federal grant funding. Installation of bicycle lanes along Norris Avenue may result in conflicts with on-street parking.

9. Does the plan consider the school buses run along Grove in terms of the remaining width of the road?

Response | In areas with proposed bicycle lanes, the travel lanes will be maintained at 11 feet wide. There is no proposal to revise school bus routes. Since bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicles, bicyclists should stop within the bicycle lanes for school buses when stopped with red lights flashing.

10. How will the markings be maintained following this project?

Response | The Federal grant awarded to fund this project is for design and construction of the proposed features and does not include future maintenance. Future maintenance of the proposed shared lane markings and bicycle lanes will be performed by Metuchen Borough.

11. Grove Avenue is a busy street, and people generally drive over the 25mph limit. Would there be heightened enforcement of speed and other traffic regulations after the lanes are in place?

Response | Metuchen Borough representatives will coordinate with representatives from Metuchen's police department regarding traffic enforcement.

12. The corner of State Route 27 Middlesex Avenue and Grove Avenue is already a very complex turn right or left. How will these markings interplay?

Response | As indicated on the plans and during the presentation, areas with insufficient existing width (notably at signalized intersections with dedicated turn lanes), bicyclists will share the road with vehicles. In the case of State Route 27 Middlesex Avenue's intersection with Grove Avenue,

bicyclists will share the through lane for this intersection.

In order to continue bicycle lanes through the intersection, roadway widening would be required, which is outside the scope of work for this project.

13. What kind of financing is needed to replace the State Route 27 Middlesex Avenue /Grove Avenue traffic light to include a pedestrian & bike only cycle? Is that something that could also be proposed for grant support?

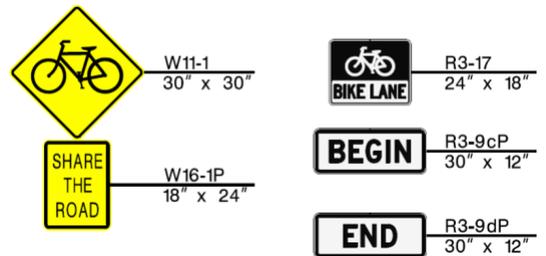
Response | Generally, improvements to traffic signals are not included in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects. In the case of State Route 27 Middlesex Avenue's signalized intersection, there has been discussions between Metuchen Borough and New Jersey Department of Transportation regarding improvements to this intersection and the signals.

14. What is the status of signage with this project? Concern expressed about sign clutter including a statement that numerous signs were installed previously as part of an earlier project.

Response | Proposed signage included in the proposed improvements will be in accordance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) guidance. This is for the safety of all road users.

In areas with shared lane markings, the proposed signage includes Bicycle (W11-1) and "Share the Road" (W16-1P) to indicate to bicyclists and motorists that bicycles may be present within the travel lane. In areas with proposed bicycle lanes, a Bike Lane (R3-17) sign will be installed, with "Begin" (R3-9cP) and "End" (R3-9dP) present at the beginning and end of bicycle lanes (as the bicycle lanes pause in areas where it transitions to shared lane markings. Existing signs that are no longer applicable (for instance, "share the road" signs in areas with proposed dedicated bicycle lanes) will be removed. Reference the plans presented during the Virtual Public Information Center (available on the Metuchen Borough website at the link provided) for more information.

SIGN LEGEND:



In total, 27 existing signs will be removed (existing bicycle plaque and "share the road" signs that are no longer applicable) and 33 signs will be installed for the proposed shared lane markings (bicycle plaque and share the road signs) / bicycle lanes.

With regard to sign clutter, Metuchen Borough will coordinate with their maintenance division to check for existing signs that may not be required.

In the early 2000's in response to NJDOT's initiative to expand the number of bikeways or bike lanes in the state, an "ad hoc" bike lane was installed on a portion of Grove Ave. coordinated by the Borough Engineer at the time. Signs were used to indicate the location of the bike lane. Many residents objected to the number of signs and eventually the signs were removed.

15. There was a comment stating that bike lanes should not be considered.

Response | Comment received.

16. Bike lanes will make it difficult to pull in and out of driveways.

Response | The proposed signing and striping improvements are intended to bring awareness to road users of the presence of cyclists.

17. Concern expressed that Jersey City just announced it was removing bike lanes and only allowing buffered bike lanes with concrete barriers and removing bollards.

Response | Concrete barriers along Grove Ave. are not practical due to driveways and roadway setting nor can they fit within the existing curb-to-curb width, Review of news articles indicates Jersey City was considering barriers at protected bike lane locations.

18. Will the letter sent to the impacted parties be posted?

Response

The Virtual Public Information Center flyer was prepared for the meeting and distributed to two groups via the mail: Project stakeholders including representatives from Metuchen Borough, Edison Township, Middlesex County and general organizations that may have interest in the project; In addition, property owners within a 250 LF± radius of the project limits were also contacted.

The Virtual Public Information Center flyer sent via mail to the two parties above has been posted on the Metuchen Borough website and the information contained in the flyer was included in a legal notice in the Home News Tribune (MyCentralJersey.com) on September 24, 2021.

Post Virtual Public Information Center Question Period – Questions and Comments:

1. A resident living on Eggert Ave contacted the Borough and questioned if there was going to be any parking impacts in the vicinity of his home. It was explained that on Eggert Ave that sharrows, not a bike lane, are proposed due to the width of the road and that there would not be a change in parking on Eggert Ave.

Response

Please see responses included on previous pages. Eggert Avenue will feature shared lane markings so impacts to parking are not anticipated.